

**II Meeting of Cultural Commons in Medellin**  
**Report by Penny Travlou, Alexander Correa and Luciana Fleischman**

## II ENCUENTRO DE COMUNES CULTURALES EN MEDELLÍN

JUEVES 20 DE JUNIO

Lo Común en las instituciones culturales  
¿Cómo lo hacemos real?

**Presentación de experiencias**

3 pm - 6 pm en el Museo de Antioquia

VIERNES 21 DE JUNIO

Lo Común en nuestro ecosistema cultural  
¿Y entonces qué?

**Mesa de trabajo**

2 pm - 5 pm en el Museo de Antioquia

Organiza:



PLATOHEDRO



MUSEO DE ANTIOQUIA



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

## II Meeting of Cultural Commons in Medellin | 20 – 21 June 2019

### Report by Penny Travlou, Alexander Correa and Luciana Fleischman

#### Published in November 2019

### Summary of the proposal

In 2018, Platohedro organised a series of workshops where artists and representatives of cultural institutions and organizations discussed cultural commons as resources for artistic and cultural creation, places where value is produced. During this first meeting we reflected on the meaning of cultural commons, how we put them into practice and what challenges arise in our city (in this [link](#) you can check the 2018 report with the activities developed).

This year (2019) we proposed to take a further step towards collective action. In collaboration with the Museum of Antioquia, we invited again artists, cultural producers and independent art organisations to deepen this reflection and jointly explore strategies for the implementation of cultural commons in our city.

*The Commons* (in English) refers to those social and collective practices that realise values inspired by the idea of collective wellbeing. Exploring the commons in the context of cultural and artistic practices is key, since values of the commons apply to the knowledge, resources and tools that we have, create and share. This also involves considering the ways in which we, as agents of culture, interact, the mutual recognition of our affinities and differences and the search for joint strategies to build a cultural ecosystem based on the indigenous concept of *Buen Vivir* (good living in English). Can we recognize the value of cultural commons when we talk about cultural heritage?

*Aimed at:* independent art and culture, community, public and private art and culture projects, artists, groups, managers and other people interested in reflecting on and exploring practices of cultural commons in the city of Medellín.

The II Meeting of Cultural Commons in Medellín is an activity organized by Platohedro in collaboration with the Museum of Antioquia and Penny Travlou (University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom).

## **Organizers**

**Alexander Correa, Platohedro**

**Luciana Fleischman, Platohedro**

**Penny Travlou, University of Edinburgh**

## **Hosts**

**Carlos Uribe, Museo de Antioquia**

**Jessica Rucinke, Museo de Antioquia**

## **Participants<sup>1</sup>**

Curator (Museum of Antioquia)

Proyecto NN

Gallery at Divas

Independent Artist/Sculptor

MSc student in anthropology (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Spain)

Cultural Heritage Office (Museum of Antioquia)

CreAcción project collectives

Municipality of Medellin (Dept of Culture)

Education Dept (Museum of Antioquia)

Student (Universidad Nacional)

---

<sup>1</sup> The list is incomplete since on the first day there was no registration of attendees.

## GOALS

*Identify the challenges of collaboration between collectives and institutions and what has worked so far (best practices).*

*Create more horizontal synergies for actors' recognition, sustainability and social/community impact.*

*Discuss new ideas/practices on commoning.*

*Develop, together with the art communities, a methodology that reflects collaborative practices and the concept of cultural commons i.e. commoning practices in the making of cultural values.*

*Understand how collectives perceive and experience collaboration in theory and practice.*

*From a research perspective, explore collaborative ethnographic practices by working together with communities of cultural producers.*

*Find ways to expand a transglobal network of cultural commoners, with Medellin as one of the geographic nodes in this network.*

### **Together with the Museum of Antioquia:**

*Methodological reflection on ways of doing in culture (reflexión metodológica sobre los haceres de la cultura) > Anilla Cultural.*

*How can we make this event different from other events in the city (where you spend a lot of time introducing yourself, where you give a lot of information and results/learning are not being shared, where discussions are quite superficial and at times limited) > Art of hosting methodologies (world café), harvesting.*

## DAY 1 - June, 20th

### **How did we do it?**

For the realization of this event we followed the methodologies of the Art of Hosting. The first call was addressed to people and organizations allied to the goals of the workshop and interested in having a space and time to reflect on the commons.

For this second workshop, we organised some pre-workshop meetings with the Museum of Antioquia to talk and imagine together how we wanted to carry out this year's event. We made three previous working group meetings analyzing the wishes of each actor involved in the pre-design of the workshop at the local level. We also had a series of conversations between Penny Travlou and Platohedro, to make the necessary logistical and economic adjustments according to the capabilities of the organisers and the scope of the workshop.

Later, Platohedro with the support of their administration and communications team generated the call for the workshop.

A meeting was also organised to talk with the persons and organizations invited to participate in the event program. Participants' roles and agendas were discussed extensively, in a series of emails before the event.

The activities of the first day were developed more explicitly through the presentation of participants experiences.

### **Activity 1 Recap - Penny**

Penny Travlou made a conceptual introduction about cultural commons and presented the main results of the [2018 meeting in Medellín](#).



### **Activity 2 Presentation of Anilla Cultural**

Jessica Rucinke and Carlos Uribe from Museum of Antioquia presented *Anilla Cultural Latinoamérica-Europa*, a network of cultural facilities located in different countries and continents, and based on the intensive use of second generation Internet. The objective of this project is the co-production of online events, promoting lines of research on new uses of the Internet in cultural production, and promoting content exchange. According to the speakers, *Anilla Cultural* offers creators a platform to experiment with new digital applications and, at the same time, to improve dissemination and intercommunication.





*Anilla Cultural* should be considered as a cultural hub that brings different institutions and art organisations together at a local, national and international level. In the latter case, it has facilitated connection between organisations in Latin America and Spain. For instance, the platform hosted a literary meeting between Barcelona and Medellin: weekly local meet-ups followed by monthly meetings between the two locations. As the speakers pointed out, an asset of *Anilla Cultural* is that it can easily become appropriated by the communities of its users. It has the potential, for example, to become a cultural hub for queer communities in different locations. *Anilla Cultural* can drive transformation of the Museum of Antioquia into an 'interconnected museum'.



### **Activity 3 Round table - experiences**

In this third session of the day, *Casa 3 Patios* (a contemporary art center that promotes social justice through art and pedagogy), *Proyecto NN* (a work platform in design, architecture and cultural practices that develop critical actions around the city), *Coonvite* (an architecture, urbanism and building collective) and the *Elemento Illegal Collective* (a school of hip-hop and urban arts collective) generated a dialogue that allowed crossings between their different experiences. This paved the way to a final conversation with the participation of the audience. Each presentation was guided by a series of questions previously sent to each organization or group, as follows:

#### **Proyecto NN**

*Can you describe any project that you have been involved in that can be understood as urban commons? Why do you consider this project as an urban commons experiment? What can we learn from this project about commoning practices? What can this project add to Medellin's urban heritage?*



### **Elemento Ilegal**

*Can you describe the context of El Faro? Can we see El Faro as a new perspective on housing and co-living, particularly in reference to displaced people? How can we see your interventions at El Faro as contributing towards buen vivir /wellbeing?*

### **Casa Tres Patios**

*Can we think of a pedagogy of commoning? What could that be? How do unlearning processes relate to the communities C3P work with (Afro and/or indigenous)? What role can these communities play in the making of a pedagogy of commons?*

### **Coonvite**

*Can you describe the context of Coonvite? How alternative forms of economy and organisation such as cooperatives can benefit the city? How can we merge together cooperative economy values with those existing in everyday urban practices of informal economy?*

### **Interviews**

After the end of Day 1, Penny Travlou together with Luciana Fleischman carried out brief interviews with:

**Proyecto NN, Elemento Ilegal, Casa Tres Patios and Coonvite** – (interview podcasts see [annex here](#))

### **Some reflections on day 1**

#### **•Activity 2:**

*Anilla Cultural* as an existing digital platform connecting different nodes within a network (art institutions across Latin America and Europe).

•“The Interconnected museum”.

#### **•Questions:**

•How can the museum be a platform that facilitates collaborative practice between art institutions and local cultural collectives?

•How can the museum establish dialogue/conversation with the communities via *Anilla Cultural*?

•How can communities appropriate *Anilla Cultural*?

•Who can be invited in a meaningful exchange

- What can we learn from communities about alternative pedagogies? Think of pedagogical practice as artistic practice.
- How can informal practices of culture contribute to in this dialogue?
- Suggestions:*
  - *Anilla Cultural* to be used by groups in Medellin to connect with other groups abroad => to create a transglobal network.
  - The meetings for cultural commons to be more frequent/regular
- Activity 3:**
  - How can we put the commons in practice?
  - It is about relationships. You need to see people face-to-face to create a solid network of commoners.
  - How can the network be sustainable? Can solidarity and common projects be our tools?
  - How can we contact dialogue in horizontal ways? “the network sometimes was conflictive, because of where each group within (the network) comes from, but projects connected us”.
  - “our meetings have the format of gathering: “*parchar*”.
  - How can we create commons in informal spaces?
  - In the periphery of the city people use ‘*minga*’ (collective work) and *parchar* (gathering) = forms of commoning.

- What mechanisms and tools could enable communities to sustain their creative processes without losing their identity? Create a toolkit to avoid our co-optation by institutions.
- How can we connect artistic spaces with social practices in the city?
- How would a “pedagogy of the commons” look like?
- How can we recognise and include marginalised groups in the discussion on cultural commons e.g. FARC groups, Afro-indigenous and trans/queer communities?
- What economic model can we use to sustain local art collectives/cultural producers in the long term? Solidarity economy? Taking examples from the *minga* practice.
- How can we go beyond precarity within these groups? Particularly, how can we avoid free labour?





## DAY 2 - June, 21st

### How did we do it?

For the second day, we wanted all the people attending to participate. For this purpose, we designed an initial and closing activity (check-in and check-out) to ensure that each and everyone was recognised. By using the world cafe methodology, we raised some questions that allow reflection from a collective intelligence.

### Activity 1 Recap from Day 1 by Penny Travlou



### Activity 2: Check-in

Circle of presentations (*check-in*)

### Activity 3: Workshop

Drawing on integrated design principles, the World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. See more at

<http://www.theworldcafe.com>

### World Café principles

- Focus on what matters
- Contribute with your thoughts
- Speak with your mind and heart

- Listen to understand
- Connect ideas
- Discover perceptions and more deep questions
- Play, write and draw
- Have fun!

## Questions

Regarding to

#Spaces

#Communities

#Pedagogies

#Economies

Anything else?

## 1. Why build the cultural commons in Medellín?

### Table 1

--Resignification of the diverse ways of understanding and inhabiting spaces, communities, pedagogies, economies.



### Table 2

#Spaces

-To claim spaces for good living

-To form new generations of sensitivity to life, art and culture

-To share resonances and human quality

#Communities

-Against selfishness

- Against the "lack of time" and speeding and in favour of slow life to allow the time to connect with each other

-Against the urgency of working, which takes away our love and creation

-To be together!! Everyone

### # Economies

- Group to manage projects together
- Alternative economies practices
- Benefit the parts
- Avoid usury
- Find independence (s)
- Social and solidarity economies

### # Pedagogies

- Learning by doing
- Have and claim the right to error

### Table 3

- Dynamics - Laboratories -horizontality - own practices (self-management) - common - transformation - co-creation (problematize the outside and inside)- relationships (spaces and organizations)
- Context - territory, space, memory - What is the impact?
- Processes, history, heritage
- Entrepreneurship culture - economies -
- Stay in community
- Entities and organizations strengthened, maintaining autonomy
- Shared goals, generating impact on communities
- Be a reference of good common cultural and social practices, management, recognize talents and skills; not competition, leadership

### Discussion

- Dynamics; hierarchies
- Rethink culture not as only a product but as a process

- Look at culture through pedagogy
- Rethink relationships between commons
- Co-creation through reflection on horizontality
- Reclaim spaces for *buen vivir*
- Sensibility of art against accelerationism - celebrate *slow life*
- Include indigenous communities and recognise the value of their knowledge
- Connecting pedagogy with territory
- Appropriation of public space
- Sustainable future(s) of the network without financialisation

### Keywords

- # Resignification of the territory
- #Commitment
- #Rethink culture
- #Good living
- #Talent
- #Connections
- #Transformation
- # Co-creation
- #Horizontality - Juntanza (*togetherness*)
- # Other territories
- #Democratization





## 2. What do we need to achieve with these objectives?

### Table 1:

- Sustainability from the outside vs. sustainability from the inside
- Other links (e.g.: La Pascasia and other arts - cinema, literature
- creating common spaces when opening the door)
- Meeting spaces
- (Genuinely) public policies -knowledge of opportunities
- contribute in construction - "stable figure". Risk: added problem, "double-edged sword": loss of autonomy.
- Wills
- Community - Territorial, thematic, political communities - generate dialogues. With whom do we generate the

conversation? -open the door to constructive feedback, learn from communities, integrate, stimulate, exchange knowledge, collective construction, training of audiences

- Research: know what the community needs, what interests them
- Generate network - communication tools, strategic alliances (e.g. Ithaca and Divas) - macro projects, resonance with the community (disinterest in arts, unemployment, "disharmony with the environment".

### Table 2

- Communication tools between groups (local and international)
- Common tools for the internal functioning of organizations
- Common goal; collective resonance, collectively built; meetings for consensus (different from democracy), dialogue with the territory.
- Exchange = Common?
- Work equipment, economy, environment, social model
- Excess, no separation

### Table 3

- Generate fabric
- Ability to manage the network and common projects; solidarity
- Exchange of knowledge
- Human, physical, material and other resources
- Sustainability, economic resources: own, self-management, institutional support, scholarships and studies
- Strategic alliances
- Making ourselves visible



## Discussion

- Generating a network beyond money: to become sustainable without financialisation of the network
- Learning from the communities: they can give us what we don't have
- Meeting with other cultural actors to strengthen the network
- Co-creating a network with common ideas
- Having the capacity to manage the network
- Encouraging knowledge exchange, building human resources
- Developing economic resources: e.g. self-management
- Finding strategic alliances
- Co-creating through collaborative learning
- Facilitating communication between local and international groups
- Creating communication tools: a "collective voice"

## Keywords

- #Cost effectiveness
- # Training of audiences
- #Interaction
- #Common projects
- #Exchange of knowledge
- #Resources (human and physical)
- #Management capacity
- #Learn from the community
- #Fabric + Network

## 3. What future do we want for cultural commons in Medellín?

- A world where many worlds fit (academics, artists, people from the neighbourhood)
- Pedagogy of solidarity
- Guarantees of respect, resistance to the advancement of intolerance
- Release from stigmas and paradigms ("normal")
- Complexity: do not simply 'solve'
- Buen Vivir vs inequities, destruction of the environment; right to exist; care for heritage; peace; healthy recreation; permanence in the territory
- Intergenerational meeting; acceptance and recognition of subjectivities
- Convite of knowledge with others; beyond the talk (epistemological extractivism and knowledge); specific needs; not everyone wins or always wins; related experiences; replication of positive experiences (e.g.: Divas and library of the Museum of Antioquia).

## Table 2

- Dream; wish
- (Macro projects) from Public Policies
- Strengthening of the Micro
- Rescue values: ethical, moral
- Pedagogy of solidarity: above the competitive and economic
- Work (from strengthening space); recovery of spaces; dynamics; projects
- Politics, economy, art, culture, education, family

**Table 3**

- Horizontality
- Pedagogies to open participation
- Alliance, common benefits
- Blog: *alliance of the commons redelibre.org.br*

### Discussion

- A common agreement to maintain the network
- To sustain the network with processes
- to maintain the identity of each community/initiative within the network
- to see each other as good practice
- to recognise our talents
- "when we don't know how to do something, another entity within the network can do it"*
- To include generational communities e.g. inclusion of elderly people through music
- to collaborate with academics, artists
- Convite of knowledge: learn from others: gather with others to benefit all: *convite* connects the network
- "Never stop dreaming"*
- Each group co-creates public politics at the macro-level: *"when you generate these macro-level politics, you can also generate micro-level of moral values"*
- Establish a pedagogy of solidarity instead of economics for profit and progress
- Strengthen dynamics from a political perspective

### Keywords

#Autonomy

# Shared goals

# Common = community

#Be referents of good common, social, cultural practices

#New leaders

#Subjectivities

# Recovery of the ethics

### 4. What would be the next steps to follow? How do we put it into practice?



**Table 1**

-Do

-Generate agenda - Strengthen the local. Micro-encounters without budget - Carousel (e.g., educational institutions, our

spaces, public nodes) - connect with other experiences- those of us who are alive, what is common, what we share, what I put, share portfolios, RedLibre website

-Common project - Mingas - "work parties" - from city events - from self-management - Platform - what's next? What we have, strategic alliance, manage, organize an event, local meetings of the Alliance of the Commons

-Anilla - build program - manage- How to gather the commons through the Anilla Cultural? Non-individualizing procedures.

## **Table 2**

-Allies

-City event

-To hack

-Carousel

-Roller coaster

-Exchange contacts - be intelligible, speak the language of the common

-Exchange portfolios

-Share contacts to make alliances

-What is our common goal?

-Find alternative economies

-More "parches" like Caminá pal Centro

-Cultural houses circuits

-Don't waste opportunities

-Execute the ideas

-Services, products

-What we know we don't know

## **Table 3**

-Socialize memories of this meeting with work teams and each of the organizations

-Know what each organization, page or group does; portfolio

-Generate work routines and continuous meetings

-Generate technical inputs

-Academic meetings

-Exchange of experiences in territory

-Establish binding connections

-Collaborative projects

-Generate public policy processes

-Keep adding instead of subtracting

-Collective knowledge management

## **Discussion**

-to propose *Anilla Cultural* to the network

-strengthen the local by using *Anilla Cultural*

-Create interventions oriented to action and not money

-Share and define what the network can do in specific places e.g. in el Faro

-Be like a "carouselle": go to different places

-Appropriate and hack a cultural event in the city

-Create our own event with foreign allies/contributors: from local to global alliances

-Socialise between our organisations and understand what each can offer to the others and the network

-Understand what we can do together

-Recognise our value

-Revisit the *Alliance of the Commons* blog

-Have regular meet-ups to define what the network can do

-Visit each other's space, to see what each group does

-Invite academics to reflect on the network

- Develop collaborative projects
- Co-create local politics
- Look at best practice from other networks e.g. the network of theatre spaces and stakeholders
- Demand, as a whole network, resources for the commons
- Look out for alternative economies
- Act and execute
- Create a database of all artists
- Promote 'art of common wellbeing'

### Keywords

- #Microencounters
- # Socialization of our practices (internal, external)
- #Public policy processes
- # Alternative economies
- #Execute ideas
- #Know and recognize the agents

### Activity 3: Conclusions

Check out circle



- Expand the network: bring new collectives/groups in the network e.g. self-organised spaces in the periphery
- Create micro-scale alliances that don't need to be always present at all meetings and actions: small alliances make a network
- Think globally as well, by creating a transglobal network of alliances. *Anilla Cultural* can be used as a springboard for global alliances
- Create peer-to-peer networks within the network: those who will be in the network should use their passions to sustain the network
- Ensure respect of each other by attending common activities
- "the memories created by the two-day workshop should be recognised within the report"*



-*"In the Alliance of the Commons, during the assemblies we tried to create the feeling of togetherness. Today, you tried to recreate this moment. But, what happens next? There should be an initiative to continue the network by inviting others too"*

-*"Let's make it active and create memories"*

-*"This meeting is to gather old and new members."*

-The database of the Alliance of the Commons can be revisited for facilitating the network

-Start discussing things we have in common, so that these meetings can happen again.

-*"It is important to know each other so that collaborations can start."*

-*"This meeting is important for these political moments we live at present"*

-*"Alone I cannot do things; with others I can do things instead"*

-The city is still unknown to us: we need to connect with other groups which are out there.

-*"This workshop is against neoliberal practices and is challenging for this reason."*

-*"When we speak of solidarity we need to think of us as individuals not only as network members."*

-*"We need to understand complex words such as solidarity, self-organisation, co-optation"*

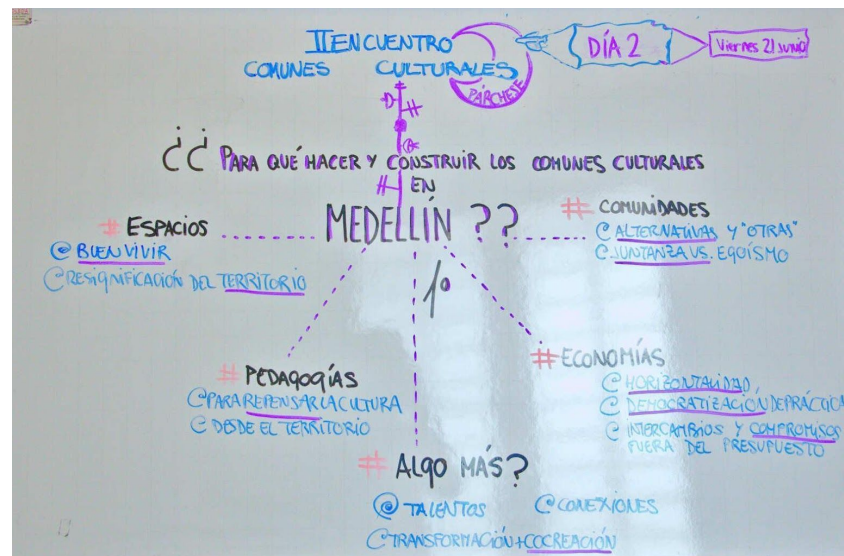
-Recognise that the commons is not a new concept. In academic discourse, there is a lot of work on the subject. *"We can learn a lot from academic theory on the commons."*

-*"I see hope on how groups and families can heal from collective trauma. The workshop can be seen as therapy, as collective work can give hope. We cannot be silent."*

-*"It is important to hear others speak about the commons so I can learn more about."*

-*"We see that local government often extrapolates the stories of the communities. To avoid this, in the report you need to narrate the stories as been narrated during the workshop."*

-*"To use p2p ethnography to observe and reflect on the stories and memories built by the network."*

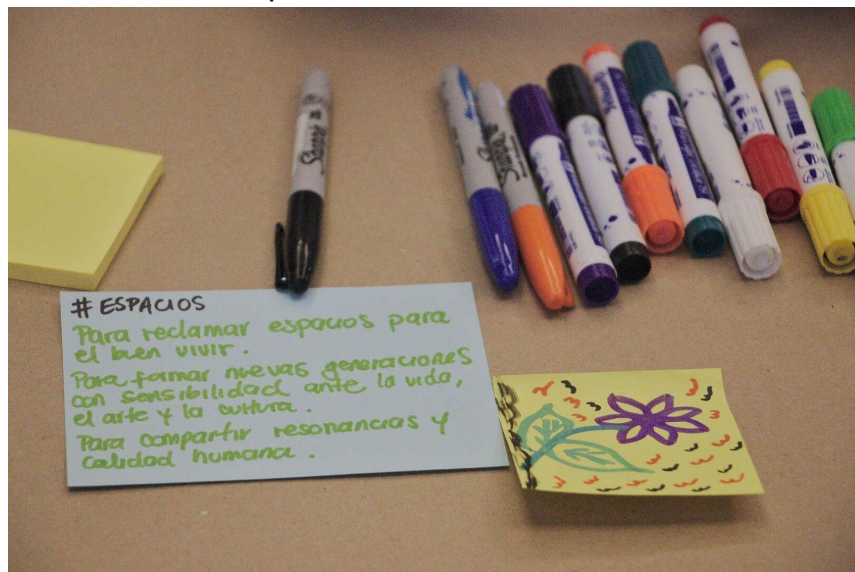


## Reflections on day 2

### General reflections

The two-day workshops aimed to open a dialogue between art institutions (the Museum of Antioquia) and independent local art organisations and cultural producers. We wanted to identify together what/who creates cultural commons in Medellin. During the various presentations and activities, it

became evident that this discussion should be opened up to more participants and, most importantly, that we should share views, thoughts, concerns and tools around cultural commons as much as aspirations and visions about the cultural values (co-)produced in Medellin. Some more specific reflections about the workshops are as follows:



-Can the dialogue with art institutions really happen? This is a complex question, to which there may not be one single answer. It might be better to turn this question around and, instead, accept that the success of an independent art organisation, community project or self-organised art collective may not be predicated upon its recognition by a public art institution and/or the state. This requires a process of *unlearning* from the side of independent art organisations

and communities: moving away from and beyond expectations of official recognition of their value. On the other hand, art institutions need to open up more towards small, independent art organisations and make more of an effort to understand what really matters to communities and where and how culture is created in the city at present. One main threat – and thus concern – for independent art organisations and communities is their co-optation by art institutions. They feel that their value is often ‘monetised’ - it becomes a cultural asset - by the latter. It is also worth-mentioning here that public art institutions have full agendas. They constantly have to juggle between projects and prioritise their time and commitment according to what they think is more important at that moment. Often, they cannot commit to long-term collaboration(s). For that matter, grassroots art collectives and small cultural organisations may need to find other ways to collaborate with art institutions, as, for example, by making use of the latter’s infrastructure (venues, marketing, network of contacts, etc.).

-The workshops offered the opportunity for an existing network of cultural producers and independent art organisations to meet again after a long time. The question that arose during these two days was: “*what makes the network?*”. The simple answer was that the network is made up by different nodes (groups/individuals) with their own smaller networks. It is about an *ecosystem of relations* that is mapped across the city according to the locations of these groups, individuals and networks. The network needs to become strengthened. This can be archived by building the confidence of its members on their qualities, talents, skills and values, as well as by recognising the network’s

polyphonic nature, the different voices within it. Network members should recognise 'best practice' within the network. Based on this recognition, they can build their confidence and be clearer on what they expect from a dialogue and/or collaboration with public art institutions.



-It was agreed that *memory* plays an important role in strengthening and sustaining the network. There should be a way to archive all these shared memories – perhaps a database of collective memories. There are invaluable moments in past common projects, visions and discussions that continue to give shape and life to the network. These moments are precious for the present and the future of the network. Collective memory also offers a time to reflect. This

on its own suggests the importance of 'slow life', where trust is built in time, and relations are valued more highly than successful projects. It is about how we do things together; how we built meaningful and long-lasting collaborations.

-Reflecting back to those memories of the network, it became apparent that its strength was the collaboration between network members in common projects: working together. As network members declared, "projects connected us". They valued collaborative processes as much as individual traits, skills, knowledge. These memories were vivid enough to emphasise the value of informality within the network: meetings looked more like gatherings between friends (*parchar*), allowing space for real camaraderie (trusted and mutual friendship) to evolve.

-*"Sharing is caring"* was a very strong value within the network. When discussing their common projects, such as *Manga Libre*, it was clear that their communal work (*minga*) was translated into community care. The infrastructure of the *Manga Libre* was based on relations and collective work: friends, colleagues and neighbours made the project work by offering their skills and knowledge and, most importantly, their care for the common good of the community. They were building an urban commons that was based on commoning practices – and cultural values – of care and collaboration.

-The network members also deployed traditional local practices such as *minga* (communal work), *parchar* (gathering), *convite* (invitation/celebration) to promote *Sumac Kawsay* (*buen vivir* in Spanish) or, in other words, commons. *Buen vivir*, good living, translates into *wellbeing* of both the communities and the individuals within them. These traditional cultural values are currently reinvented by the



independent art organisations and associated communities. Blended with other tools of doing things together (e.g. open source, hacktivism, transmedia) these cultural values provoke a new dialogue around what constitutes intangible cultural heritage in Medellin.

- "Sustainability" is indeed a fuzzy word when it comes to the long-term survival and legacy of projects, organisations and networks like the ones participating in the workshops. Groups within the network agreed unanimously that they should look for a sustainable future without submitting to financialisation and co-optation. Instead, they should value their assets – collaborative practices, radical pedagogies, sharing skills and tools, learning from communities – and, most importantly, challenge exchange value by demonstrating that affective actions such as solidarity and care can constitute value as well.

### Post Evaluation (organisation of events)

*What went well?*

*What can be done differently?*



**PARTICIPATION** > The first day of the workshop was well attended, with a large number of attendees participating in the discussion after the end of the talks. On the other hand, the second day was less well attended. A two-day event may be challenging, as it demands commitment and time from participants. The programme of the second day included more hands-on activities requiring direct participation of the attendees. Presentations tend to create a form of boundaries for those who would like to participate more actively in discussions and dialogue. For future events, it might be better to focus on a more interactive and participatory workshop format.

**INCLUSION** > In this year's two-day workshops, we tried to include more diverse groups and individuals than our last workshops in 2018. We invited the local *Gallery at Divas* which



works with the transgender community in the city. In the course of the workshops it was agreed that it was crucial for the sustainability of the network of cultural producers and independent art organisations to expand and include more diverse and under-represented collectives. Their contribution can be invaluable for developing further the work on cultural commons, since their experiences and practices can inform novel approaches on how to co-create intangible cultural heritage in Medellin.

COLLABORATION > The workshops were based on collaboration. We collaborated as an organising team, with regular online meetings to plan the two-day workshops and with intensive meetings in *Platohedro* the week before the events. Our collaboration was on all aspects of the organisation, including decisions on invited speakers, workshop format and schedule. We also collaborated with the *Museum of Antioquia* on the organisation as well as the content of the workshops. Due to different work schedules, priorities and agendas, our partners in the *Museum of Antioquia* were not as easy to reach at all times. Finally, we collaborated with the invited speakers and their organisations, to plan together their participation in the events. It is worth mentioning here that our experience taught us that personal contact is much more valuable than informal communication via emails. For this reason, we took extra care to contact and speak with each individual speaker in person. The workshops also gave an existing network of collaborators and members of the *Alliance of the Commons* the opportunity to meet and discuss afresh their collaborative work and how they can sustain their commoning practices together. It was agreed

that members of the *Alliance of the Commons* should organise further meetings and events.

### Next steps

After this meeting, there was also an informal meeting between some of the members of the *Alliance of the Commons*. Several proposals emerged in that meeting:

- Review the archive material of actions and documents produced in previous years.
- Make this archive visible and share it with other people, to encourage debate and reflection.
- Have more regular informal meetings, to keep in touch with each other and co-ordinate possible joint actions in the future.

In addition, on August 23, the *Parliament of the Commons* was held in *Manga Libre* (the community park in front of *Platohedro*), hosted by Pedro Soler (artist, curator and researcher, resident in Ecuador). This event served to reconnect with people and groups that were part of the *Alliance of the Commons* and also added new cultural agents such as the eight youth entrepreneurship groups participating in the *CreAcción 2019* training process promoted by *Platohedro*.

More activities are coming. Stay tuned!

**Team Credits:**

Graphic narrative: María Collado  
Translation: Luciana Fleischman  
Audio recordings: Juan Jaramillo  
Pictures: Duvan Rueda

**Audio recordings**

<https://archive.org/details/2doencuentrocomunesmedellin>

**Contact us:**

Alexander Correa: alexanderrubeola@gmail.com  
Luciana Fleischman: residenciasplatohedro@gmail.com  
Penny Travlou: p.travlou@ed.ac.uk

**Credits***Platohedro*

Platohedro is a non-profit organisation that serves as a creative and collaborative platform in the city of Medellin, Colombia. Since 2004 it is dedicated to artistic experimentation and creation, continuous study of open culture and self learning. These processes are inspired by the philosophy of *Buen Vivir* (Good Living) and *Buen Conocer* (Good Knowledge).  
<http://platohedro.org/>

*Museum of Antioquia*

The Museum of Antioquia (Museo de Antioquia) is an art museum in Medellin, Colombia. It was the first museum established in Antioquia and the second in Colombia.

*Edinburgh College of Art/University of Edinburgh*

Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) is one of eleven Schools in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Edinburgh, UK.

The two-day workshops were funded by the Edinburgh College of Art Research and Knowledge Exchange Small Grants Scheme 2019

## **Appendix**

### **Day 2 Workshop Format**

#### **Art of Hosting** (Source: <https://www.artofhosting.org>)

The Art of Hosting is a highly effective way of harnessing the collective wisdom and self-organizing capacity of groups of any size. Based on the assumption that people give their energy and lend their resources to what matters most to them – in work as in life – the Art of Hosting blends a suite of powerful conversational processes to invite people to step in and take charge of the challenges facing them.

Groups and organizations using the Art of Hosting as a working practice report better decision-making, more efficient and effective capacity building and greater ability to quickly respond to opportunity, challenge and change. People who experience the Art of Hosting typically say that they walk away feeling more empowered and able to help guide the meetings and conversations they are part of move towards more effective and desirable outcomes.

#### **Using all the ingredients of good conversation**

So why is conversation so powerful? Conversation, more than any other form of human interaction, is the place where we learn, exchange ideas, offer resources and create innovation. Not every conversation works like this, though.

Many people experience meetings that waste time, conversations that feel more like debates, and invitations to input which turn out to be something altogether different.

People want to contribute, but they can't see how. Leaders want contribution, but they don't know how to get it.

The Art of Hosting offers a blend of some of the most powerful methods to create open and meaningful conversation that leads to commitment and good results. Working with a range of collaborative methods – like Circle, World Café, Appreciative Inquiry, Open Space Technology, ProAction Café, storytelling and more – practitioners can tailor the approach to their context and purpose.

#### **World Cafe Method**

Drawing on [seven integrated design principles](#), the World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue.

World Café can be modified to meet a wide variety of needs. Specifics of context, numbers, purpose, location, and other circumstances are factored into each event's unique invitation, design, and question choice, but the following five components comprise the basic model:

1) *Setting*: Create a “special” environment, most often modelled after a café, i.e. small round tables covered with a chequered or white linen tablecloth, butcher block paper, coloured pens, a vase of flowers, and optional “talking stick” item. There should be four chairs at each table (optimally) – and no more than five.

2) *Welcome and Introduction*: The host begins with a warm welcome and an introduction to the World Café process, setting the context, sharing the Cafe Etiquette, and putting participants at ease.

3) *Small Group Rounds*: The process begins with the first of three or more twenty minute rounds of conversation for the small group seated around a table. At the end of the twenty minutes, each member of the group moves to a different new table. They may or may not choose to leave one person as the “table host” for the next round, who welcomes the next group and briefly fills them in on what happened in the previous round.

4) *Questions*: each round is prefaced with a **question** specially crafted for the specific context and desired purpose of the World Café. The same questions can be used for more than one round, or they can be built upon each other to focus the conversation or guide its direction.

5) *Harvest*: After the small groups (and/or in between rounds, as needed), individuals are invited to share insights or other results from their conversations with the rest of the large group. These results are reflected visually in a variety of ways, most often using [graphic recording](#) in the front of the room.

The basic process is simple and simple to learn, but complexities and nuances of context, numbers, question crafting and purpose can make it optimal to bring in an experienced host to help. Should that be the case, professional consulting services and senior hosts are

available through [World Cafe Services](#) and we would be happy to talk with you about your needs.

In addition, there are many resources available for new World Cafe hosts, including a free [hosting tool kit](#), an online [community of practice](#), and World Cafe [Signature Learning Programs](#).

Source: <http://www.theworldcafe.com/>

## Key Concepts

### *Cultural Commons*

- a) Something that we create together. Examples include Wikipedia, which participants research, write and manage together online, or ancient indigenous traditions forged and passed along by a particular group e.g. *Minga* (‘community work’ in Ecuadorian indigenous cultures)
- b) A way of creativity that embraces values such as sharing, community and stewardship as opposed to privatization, enclosure and exploitation.

[https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Coalition\\_for\\_the\\_Cultural\\_Commons](https://wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Coalition_for_the_Cultural_Commons)

### *Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Intangible cultural heritage includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge



and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/what-is-intangible-heritage-00003>

### **Collaborative Ethnography & P2P Methodology**

The two-day workshops are also part of an ongoing research project by Penny Travlou (ECA/University of Edinburgh) since 2015. Penny looks at emerging intangible cultural heritage as manifested in the thriving grassroots art community in Medellin. The ethnographic methodology used throughout this project (including the workshops in 2018 and 2019) is shaped by, and mirror, the networks, spaces, practices of co-creation and collaborative ethos of the “subject” communities. This ethnography is collaborative and 'peer to peer' (p2p). This enables multiple voices to contribute actively in the making of the ethnography. Penny's collaborative ethnographic framework is interlinked with the scope of the workshops. Within the process of collaborative ethnography, the team (Penny, Alex and Luciana) co-designed the workshops and co-authored the report merging together their notes and other material produced during the events.

### *Collaborative Ethnography*

*“We might sum up collaborative ethnography as an approach to ethnography that deliberately and explicitly emphasizes collaboration at every point in the ethnographic process, without veiling it—from project conceptualization, to fieldwork,*

*and, especially, through the writing process. Collaborative ethnography invites commentary from our consultants and seeks to make that commentary overtly part of the ethnographic text as it develops. In turn, this negotiation is reintegrated back into the fieldwork process itself. Importantly, the process yields texts that are co-conceived or cowritten with local communities of collaborators and consider multiple audiences outside the confines of academic discourse, including local constituencies. These texts can—and often do—include multiple authors; but not exclusively so. Collaborative ethnography, then, is both a theoretical and a methodological approach for doing and writing ethnography.”* (see full citation: Lassiter, E. (2005) *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; p. 15).

Complementary to collaborative ethnography, a p2p methodology has been developed to enable each participant – as a node within the network - to know, reflect upon and react to the various positions of other individuals and groups within it. P2p ethnography can be considered as a space in which participants position themselves, and from which they are able to observe the dynamic, emergent transformation of the network and of groups and individuals that constitute it.

**Glossary (NOTE: the definitions of the terms below are based on their official definition and how are used in local context)**

### *Anilla Cultural*

*Anilla Cultural Latin America – Europe is a network of co-creation, collaboration and participation that links Latin America and Europe in the field of contemporary cultural action through the intensive use of second generation Information and Communication and Internet Technologies.*

Anilla Cultural's network includes the following institutions: the Centro Cultural Sao Paulo, the Museo de Antioquia, the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de la Universidad de Chile, the Centro Cultural España-Córdoba and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona.

*The objectives of Anilla Cultural Latin America - Europe are:*

- The promotion of co-creation and the exchange of content and initiatives between Latin American and European cultural facilities.*
- Research, experimentation and innovation in the cultural field.*
- The promotion of the use of ICT in the management of cultural activities*

Source: <http://anillacultural.net>

### *Buen Vivir*

Sumak Kawsay - *buen vivir* in Spanish that translates into *good living* in English - is the cosmovision of the Andean Quechua people that true wellbeing is only possible as part of a community. The good of the community is placed above that of the individual. This is community in

an expanded sense; it includes Nature, plants, animals, and the Earth. Nature itself must be cared for and respected as a valuable part of the community. The land cannot be owned; it should be honored and protected.

### *Autonomy*

Autonomy refers to self-governance, so autonomous self-management and self-governance.

### *Buen Conocer*

Buen Conocer refers to open, participatory and collaborative knowledge as well as sharing this knowledge.

### *Convite:*

Convite is an invitation to collectively create and make something together, usually offering food as an exchange.

### *Collaborative Economy*

The collaborative economy is defined as practices and business models based on horizontal networks and participation of a community. It is built on distributed power and trust within communities as opposed to centralized institutions, blurring the lines between producer and consumer. Collaborative economies consist of giving, swapping, borrowing, trading, renting, and sharing products and services for a fee, between an individual who has something and an individual who needs something – generally with the help of a web-based middleman. A collaborative economy may also be known as a "shared economy," "sharing

economy" or a "peer-to-peer economy."

#### *Informal Economy*

The informal economy is the part of an economy that is neither taxed nor monitored by any form of government. It is the diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs, and workers that are not regulated or protected by the state.

#### *Manga Libre*

Manga libre is a community and social revitalization project in a vacant space in the Buenos Aires neighborhood in Medellín in collaboration between Platóhedro, other art collectives, grassroots organizations and neighbors, friends and partners. *Manga Libre works as a meeting space for workshops, conversations, concerts, screenings, rest and patch.*

#### *Minga*

Minga is a Quechua term defining an ancestral mechanism for collective work that's very common in Ecuador and the north of Perú. The common objective is always more important than any individual benefit as collaboration trumps competition

#### *Parchar*

*Parchar is a local popular activity that has its roots in indigenous traditions of gathering people together to be in what we now call public space and to appropriate this space into commons. It is about creating spaces of freedom and autonomy. Parchar as a word-concept can*

*go beyond the practice of gathering and define co-creation, dialogue and sharing knowledge among people and groups: it can be considered as an intangible cultural heritage that creates cultural values.*

#### *Peer2peer (parchar2parchar)*

It is a specific form of relational dynamic, is based on the assumed equipotency of its participants, organized through the free cooperation of equals in view of the performance of a common task, for the creation of a common good, with forms of decision-making and autonomy that are widely distributed throughout the network. The local appropriation of this term is *Parchar2parchar or beer2beer that not always is oriented to some production but for the pleasure to gather and probably do things together, but not necessarily.*

#### *Radical Imagination*

Radical Imagination, like the paradigm shift, is a complete rethinking of things that are otherwise unthought of. This is important for developing AC and our own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world.

#### *Self-organisation*

Self-organisation is about the many approaches to the creation, dissemination and maintenance of alternative models for social and economic organisation, and the practical and theoretical implications, consequences and possibilities of these self-organised structures. Self-organisation strategies are radical alternatives to

classical capitalist economic organisation that exploit, or have been produced by, the existing global economic system

#### *Self-sustainability*

Self-sustainability is a type of sustainable living in which nothing is consumed other than what is produced by the self-sufficient individuals.

#### *Unlearning*

Unlearning is the act of changing paradigms. It entails rethinking the things we have learned within conventional and restrictive learning environments. To unlearn is to question preconceived, and assumed 'truths'. In so doing we (re)learn alternatives and better understand our own assumptions. This is important for developing our own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world.



This report is under the  
[Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0  
International licence \(CC BY-NC-SA 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)